Water pollution law

†899.SHRIMATI MAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether in order to prevent water pollution, Government would contemplate stringent law against those who pollute banks of big canals and rivers adjoining cities;

(b) whether Government has prepared any plan to prevent water pollution; and

(c) the works that would be given first priority under Ganga Action Plan for making the river pollution free and the budget allocated by Government for this project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) In order to prevent water pollution, the Government has enacted the following environmental legislations:-

i. The Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974: the Act was enacted to provide for the prevention and control of water pollution and maintaining or restoring of wholesomeness of water including canals and rivers.

ii. The Environment (Protection) Act, 1986: the Act was enacted to provide for the protection and improvement of environment and for matters connected therewith. This is an umbrella legislation.

These legislations have stringent provisions for imprisonment and/or fine in case of contravention of the relevant provisions of the Act.

(b) and (c) A National Water Quality Monitoring programme (NWMP) is being implemented which helps in evaluating the nature and extent of pollution control required, effectiveness of pollution control measures already in existence, drawing the water quality trends and prioritizing the pollution control efforts. The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) has established a network of monitoring stations on various water bodies across the Country.

A Central Sponsored Scheme of National River Conservation Plan (NRCP) is also being implemented to cover pollution abatement works in the identified polluted stretches of 37 major rivers in 166 towns spread over 20 States in the country. A budget allocation of Rs. 2100 crore has been made in the XI Plan for the National River Conservation Plan which includes Ganga Action Plan. The pollution abatement works which have been taken up under NRCP include core works of interception and diversion of sewage and setting up of sewage treatment plants besides non-core works such as river front development, low cost sanitation, crematoria etc.

Climate change

900. SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the climate change has affected the onset of monsoon in India;

(b) if so, the details thereof,

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi

(c) whether Government is taking steps to address the challenges of climate change; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) and (b) The long-term mean onset date of monsoon in India is 1st June with a standard deviation of about 8 days. During last century, multi-decadal fluctuations with early/late onset by a few days over and above the long-term mean are not uncommon. However, such year to year variations in the onset or the propagation are part of the natural variability and cannot be attributed to climate change. Climate Model studies carried out by Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM) show no significant Impact on change in the mean onset of monsoon in India.

(c) and (d) Government is aware of the challenges posed by climate change and has taken steps in this regard. The National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) was released on 30th June 2008 to outline India's strategy to meet the challenge of Climate Change. The National Action Plan outlines steps that will enable the country to adapt to climate change and enhance the ecological sustainability of India's development path. A dedicated Centre for climate change research at IITM, Pune has been set-up to undertake focused research on the science aspects of climate change.

Tiger Population

901. SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the tiger population in some of the National Reserve Forests has depleted completely;

(b) if so, the details and the status thereof;

(c) whether Government is contemplating action to check the same and to restore the tiger population; and

(d) if so, the policy and details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) and (b) As per the findings of the recent All India tiger estimation in 2008 using the refined methodology, the total country-level population of tiger is 1411 (mid value); the lower and upper limits being 1165 and 1657 respectively, as indicated in the statement-I (*See* below). The new findings are based on spatial occupancy of tigers and sampling such forests using camera traps in a statistical framework, which is not comparable to the earlier total count using pugmarks. The said findings indicate a poor status of tiger population in areas outside tiger reserves and protected areas. The tiger population, by and large, In tiger reserves and protected areas of the 17 tiger States are viable, while requiring ongoing conservation efforts. In the recent past, tigers have become locally extinct in Sariska and Panna Tiger Reserves mainly due to poaching. While a CBI investigation was done in the case of Sariska, a Special Investigating Team (SIT) was constituted by